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10 July 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: Inspector General

SUBJECT : Personnel Office

1. With reference to your memorandum of 1 July on a survey of the Personnel Office, the following is a summary of the experience of the Office of the General Counsel:

a. Staffing. Insofar as the staffing of the Office of the General Counsel is concerned the Personnel Office has been completely cooperative and effective. After careful survey they agreed a couple of years ago to put my professional staff on a system of additional and identical positions which allows me to promote lawyers on the basis of capabilities and ability to assume responsibility. This, I believe, is the only way to run a law firm.

The Personnel Office has been considerate, although not overyielding, on the classification of the clerical personnel of the Office. They have recognized the need of a small office for congenial as well as efficient clerical personnel and have exerted considerable effort to locate suitable secretaries or have been helpful in working out internal transfers initiated by us.

b. Special Problems.

(1) This Office handles the legislative personnel requests and has arranged with Personnel a system for expeditious handling of congressional cases, which has been operating effectively for several years. Recently, upon the extended absence of the Legislative Counsel's secretary, Personnel arranged the loan of [REDACTED] to fill in for the handling of congressional cases, which was a most effective arrangement.

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(2) There are certain fields in which we have been involved with the Personnel Office and with which we are not completely satisfied. In predecessor agencies and in the early days of CIA this Office handled employees' compensation cases with the Bureau of Employees' Compensation. Particularly with the expert handling given by Mr. [REDACTED] we made considerable progress in cases previously not accepted by BEC. With our agreement this function was turned over to Personnel with the understanding, of course, that we would give staff legal advice. We have not since then been happy either with the manner in which the cases were processed nor with what appears to us to be a lack of background and imagination in developing the cases. While we do not want the function back, there may be a need for a shake up and possibly for the recruitment of a top-flight man in this field. I can submit a detailed report on this, orally or in writing, if you desire.

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(3) Another field where we sense the lack of ability to handle situations effectively is in personnel appeals and similar hearings. Heretofore, we have usually been brought in on such matters only after a case has bogged down, and we are inclined to believe that such hearings are not handled in an orderly and effective manner. We have received some indication that the Personnel Office would be willing to have us assist in the early stages of such cases, and this may work out.

(4) In abnormal circumstances arising out of the problems peculiar to this Agency, we have usually felt that the Personnel Office showed an inability to analyze and negotiate with outside agencies or organizations. I can give several examples if you wish, and a typical one arose out of the fact that occasionally a covert employee is put in a position where there are deductions for both retirement and Social Security. Under very rare circumstances notice of the two deductions comes to the Civil Service Commission, which then has reason to believe that there is a dual compensation case. In the initial cases we had to take them to the General Counsel to the Comptroller General, who personally arranged for settlement of the cases. We promised him that a solution to this problem would be worked out with the Civil Service Commission, and the matter was turned over to Personnel as the proper link to that agency. No solution has been achieved, and in recent discussions when we suggested a solution and an

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approach two minor officials were dispatched to enter negotiations without either background or preparation, and nothing was achieved. Personnel is aware of this and admitted that it did not carry out its part, so we will go with them to resolve this problem. I point it out as an indication of a lack of flexibility in meeting new and unusual problems.

2. In summary I would say that the Personnel Office has been effective in straight personnel work as far as this Office is concerned, but is somewhat at a loss when it gets out of the immediate personnel field. We have had, however, nothing but the most willing cooperation from them, and I have considerable respect for the professional knowledge of the top members of the staff.

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LAWRENCE R. HOUSTON
General Counsel

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